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Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society

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ACRONYMS

API	Asociatia Presei Independente (Association of Independent Press)
APT	Asociatia Psihologilor Tighina (Association of Psychologists from Tighina)
ATVJI	Asociatia “V.I.P.” a Telejurnalistilor Independenti din Republica Moldova (Association of Independent TV Journalists)
CAJPD	Centrul pentru Asistenta Juridica pentru Persoane cu Dizabilitati (Center of Legal Assistance for Persons with Disabilities)
CB	Capacity building
CJI	Centrul pentru Jurnalism Independent (Independent Journalism Center)
CJU	Clinica Juridica Universitara (University Legal Clinic)
CICO	Centrul de Informare si Consultanta Organizationala (Center for Organizational Consultancy and Training)
CNTM	Consiliul National al Tineretului din Moldova (National Youth Council of Moldova)
CPD	Centrul Parteneriat pentru Dezvoltare (Center Partnership for Development)
CRJ	Centrul de Resurse Juridice (Legal Resources Centre)
CRPE	Reprezentanta din Republica Moldova a Centrului Roman de Politici Europene (Moldovan Branch of Romanian Center for European Policies)
CSC	Community Scorecard
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTO	Consultancy and Training Organization
ECNL	European Center for Not-for-Profit Law
EP	Engage Program
EU	European Union
FEE	Fundatia Est-Europeana (East Europe Foundation)
FCPS	Femeia si Copilul – Protectie si Sprijin (Woman and Child – Protection and Support)
FDRM	Fundatia pentru Dezvoltare din RM (Foundation for Advancement of Moldova)
HR	Human resource
GoM	Government of Moldova
LPA	Local Public Authority
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MPSCS	Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society
ODA	Organizational Development Assessment
PWD	People with Disabilities
SP	Support Program
TA	Technical Assistance
TDP	Training and Development Plan
TDV	Tinerii pentru Dreptul la Viata (Youth for the Right to Life)
TsL	Centrul de Resurse Tineri si Liberi (Young and Free Resource Center)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WG	Working group

I. INTRODUCTION

This report covers the ninth quarterly reporting period (January 1 – March 31, 2016) of the Moldova Partnerships for Sustainable Civil Society (MPSCS) project. MPSCS is a five-year project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by FHI 360 and its partner the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ECNL).

The purpose of the project is to improve the capacity of Moldovan civil society to represent citizens' interests, influence policymaking, and sustain the sector's democratic role for the future.

MPSCS accomplishes this goal by meeting three objectives:

Objective 1: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) more effectively represent their constituencies

Objective 2: Institutional capacity of strategic partners developed

Objective 3: Enabling environment more conducive to long-term sustainability of civil society

Under Objective 1, twenty-one MPSCS Engage Program (EP) and Support Program (SP) grantees continued organizing proposed activities in line with their implementation plans under this award. Organizations invited national and local public authorities (LPA) to roundtables, press clubs, and workshops to ensure their constituencies' rights are secured in line with best international practice. In the reporting period, grantees worked efficiently with media to inform the public about the situation of their target groups such as the Moldovan elderly, people with disabilities (PWD), youth, women, employees and employers and others and what should be done to improve the situation.

Under the People with Disabilities Rights program, five CSOs working to promote PWD rights continued to serve 188 people with special needs through individual assistance and consultancy and train 60 persons in PWD rights protection and involvement in government decision-making.

Nine subgrantees of Fundatia Est-Europeana – FEE (East Europe Foundation) completed their grants during the quarter and met their project objectives by organizing their final planned activities and reaching over 450,000 people through public events and media.

Under the EU Actions Grants, Civil Society Support for Moldova European Integration Program (EU Action Grants Program), three CSOs finalized their projects (Interact Ltd, Pro Media Ltd, and Contact Center) and the remaining four CSOs (Perspectiva, Asociatia "V.I.P." a Telejurnalistilor Independenti din Republica Moldova – ATVJI (Association of Independent TV Journalists), Moldova Fruct, and Reprezentanta din Republica Moldova a Centrului Roman de Politici Europene – CRPE (Moldovan Branch of Romanian Center for European Policies) implemented their last project activities during this quarter, raising the awareness of at least 100,000 people about the benefits of European integration and mobilizing community support for the European path for Moldova.

Under Objective 2, MPSCS continued to provide assistance to partner CSOs in such areas as good governance, human resources, financial management, procurement and constituency engagement. Twenty-seven MPSCS SP, EP and PWD partners have implemented capacity-building activities based on their individual Training and Development Plans (TDPs), attended trainings and benefited from coaching provided by Centrul de Informare si Consultanta Organizationala - CICO (Center for Organizational Consultancy and Training) and by Caraseni Consultancy and Training Organization (CTO Caraseni). MPSCS worked closely with the Apriori Resource Centre from Tiraspol and Vesta from Comrat and carried out the first Russian-language capacity building workshop for 12 CSOs from Transnistria and Gagauz Autonomous region.

To meet Objective 3, MPSCS and its partners continued identifying gaps in the CSO-related legal framework in Moldova and consulting the best European practices in this field. The program's

Strategic partner – Centrul de Resurse Juridice – CRJ (Legal Resources Centre) focused on developing the necessary amendments to the Law on Public Associations earlier developed with ECNL assistance. CRJ collects the stakeholders' feedback on the proposed modifications and develops the amendments to the Law on Public Associations. Due to CRJ and National Council of CSOs efforts, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) created a public-private working group (WG) to discuss the CSOs' suggestions to improve the Law on Public Associations according to the European Union (EU) standards. CRJ is a member of this MoJ group. The CRJ's draft law amending the 2% designation mechanism was accepted and registered by the Parliament on February 22, 2016 and is being examined by the Parliament Committees. According to the Parliament procedures, the draft law on 2% designation mechanism should be voted/adopted by the end of July, 2016. Tineri si Liberi – TsL (Young and Free Resource Center) with the support of the National Council of CSOs worked with authorities to include civil society development issues in the Government of Moldova (GoM) action plans such as the GoM 2016-2018 Activity Program and the GoM Priority Reform Action Roadmap – a list of key measures to be fulfilled by the GoM and Parliament by July 31, 2016.

II. MPSCS HIGHLIGHTS, JANUARY 1 – MARCH 31, 2016

Objective 1: CSOs More Effectively Represent their Constituencies

- MPSCS partners influenced **nine** decisions of the LPA as a result of advocacy campaigns to improve PWD's rights, develop rural communities and solve citizens' problems at local level.
- Twenty EP and SP organizations, as well as their partner CSOs, engaged over 250 volunteers in organizational activities and 38 organizations registered as host institutions for volunteers in this quarter, as a result of TDV's assistance.
- MPSCS partner CSOs under the PWD Rights program continued to serve 188 PWD and train 60 PWD and their guardians.
- Asociatia Presei Independente – API (Association of Independent Press) and its media partners distributed 21 Romanian- and Russian-language media materials, including investigative stories, case studies, articles, TV and radio programs, three supplements containing articles about propaganda and manipulation through media, one media monitoring reports and launched the www.mediacritica.md website under the STOP FALS! campaign.

Objective 2: Institutional Capacities of Strategic Partners Developed

- Eleven Russian speaking CSO representatives from Transnistria and Gagauz Autonomous Region improved their knowledge and skills in CSO organizational development as a result of a one-day capacity building workshop and follow up technical assistance (TA) from MPSCS.
- Thirteen MPSCS partners reviewed their accounting, financial management and procurement procedures and improved human resources policies – issues identified during the second MPSCS Organizational Development Assessment (ODA).
- Eighteen CSOs learned about best practices in implementing gender equality within CSOs at a MPSCS thematic meeting.
- More than 80 CSO representatives improved their skills in human resource (HR) management and new accounting report requirements through CICO practical trainings, workshops and cluster clubs.

Objective 3: Enabling Environment More Conducive to Long-Term Sustainability of Civil Society

- National Council of CSO advocacy led to civil society development priorities being included in the GoM action plans - GoM 2016-2018 Activity Program and the GoM Priority Reform Action Roadmap –to be met by the central authorities by July 31, 2016.
- The draft law amending the 2% designation mechanism developed by CRJ was registered as a legislative initiative in the Parliament. Parliament will examine and vote on the proposed amendments in the next quarter.
- A private-public WG created by MoJ to develop a new Law on Public Associations in line with the European standards as a result of CRJ advocacy efforts.
- Motivatie developed and submitted to the GoM WG a draft law on social entrepreneurship.
- MPSCS finalized the study on CSO fundraising and philanthropy in Moldova and submitted recommendations to CSOs and public authorities to improve use of domestic sources of income.

III. MPSCS PROGRESS JANUARY 1 – MARCH 31, 2016, BY OBJECTIVE

OBJECTIVE 1: CSOS MORE EFFECTIVELY REPRESENT THEIR CONSTITUENCIES

In the ninth quarterly reporting period, MPSCS partner CSOs continued engaging authorities in solving their beneficiaries' problems. CSOs working at the national level resumed their advocacy efforts as soon as the new GoM was elected by the Parliament in January. Grantees working at the local level registered important achievements in their successful cooperation with authorities. Caroma Nord signed a Collaboration Agreement with the Balti Municipal Council and a few villages developed their Local Development Plans due to EcoContact's efforts. These and other activities are discussed in more detail later in the report.

CSO ADVOCACY AND GOVERNMENT OUTREACH

Clinica Juridica Universitara – CJU (University Legal Clinic) continued improving the quality of legal aid provided to vulnerable population. CJU provided free legal assistance mostly on retirement and family law cases to 113 vulnerable people, such as unemployed and elderly people, young mothers, and large families from the North of Moldova, who cannot afford to pay for legal assistance. In addition, based on an agreement signed between CJU and the National Council for State Guaranteed Legal Assistance, CJU referred 42 of its beneficiaries to the National Council territorial offices to be represented by state-paid lawyers in the courts.

API's Center for Assistance provided specialized TA to its 16-member independent media organizations, including regional newspapers and news agencies. In the reporting period, API legal expert monitored and assisted media outlets in four legal cases; the IT expert provided assistance on nine IT issues; API graphic designer helped solve ten technical issues; and the finance expert provided assistance eight times on various financial issues. In addition, API and its partner organizations implemented a STOP FALS! campaign against the false and biased information distributed in Moldova through the media. The STOP FALS! campaign results are described below.

Casmed continued providing home care services to elderly and disabled adults in thirteen communities in the North of Moldova. To ensure LPA cost sharing of these services the organization conducted meetings and two round table activities in Bocani and Izvoare villages, Falesti raion, with LPA representatives, local CSOs, citizens, and beneficiaries of these services. At least 60 participants got first-hand information about what type of services Casmed can provide and who can benefit. In order to improve the quality of the provided services and



Mihaileni CSO team is assisted by a Casmed expert in developing Strategic and Action plans, Mihaileni village, March 12, 2016.

Daniel V., a 12-year-old boy with an intellectual disability from Jevreni village, Criuleni district, has never attended kindergarten or school. Due to FCPS support, he was accepted to the community school with a flexible schedule. In addition, Daniel will receive individual psychological assistance.

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the gaps and potential problems, all participants completed a questionnaire on home care service provision in their localities. Casmed maintains close contact with LPA from the project localities and its partner-CSOs. The grantee offers ongoing consultancy and capacity building support to thirteen local service providers. In the reporting period, two more CSOs developed Strategic and Action Plans – a tool aimed at a

better positioning of the CSOs among local stakeholders, developing stable relationships and two-way dialog with beneficiaries and partners and strengthening the organization.

Another MPSCS grantee that supports disabled and disadvantaged persons, **Femeia si Copilul – Protectie si Sprijin – FCPS (Woman and Child – Protection and Support)** focused on developing their partners' skills in identifying and solving discrimination cases. FCPS, its four partner-CSOs and the representatives of the local public authorities met on March 1, 2016, at a round table in Hartopul Mic village. Twenty-three participants shared the individual cases of discrimination in their localities and received advice on how to address the specific cases of discrimination. In addition, the organization and its Mobile Team continues to identify disadvantaged populations om Criuleni raion and provides various forms assistance. In the reporting quarter, the grantee provided support to families of 6 undeserved children to obtain financial support from state budget, include them in educational institutions, and find employment.

In the reporting quarter, the grantee provided support to underserved families to secure jobs for adult members of their families, to obtain state-paid indemnity and enrolled a total of six children in school. After a long period of evaluation, FCPS Mobile Team which provides services to integrate disadvantaged population of Criuleni raion, was accredited by the Accreditation Council of the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family. As a result, FCPS will be able to access state funds for its services and thus substantially improve its financial viability.

According to the Law on Volunteering, Moldovan CSOs are required to develop specific internal procedures to qualify as a host institution for volunteers. To help organizations achieve this goal, **Tinerii pentru Dreptul la Viata – TDV (Youth for the Right to Life)** provided individual consultations to 10 organizations to help them comply with the Law's requirements and to obtain a Certificate of a host organization for volunteers from the relevant state body – the Certification Commission created under the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Three of these organizations have already submitted their documents to this Commission. In addition, TDV provided its expertise to the Commission members to ensure it is operating appropriately. As a result of TDVs' efforts to promote volunteering in

Moldova, a total of 58 CSOs have obtained a Certificate as a host institution for volunteers, 38 of them obtained the certificates in the reporting quarter.

Under its grant, **Vesta** and its nine partner CSOs focused on promoting the concept of Public Councils in the target localities from the South of Moldova. A public council is a voluntarily body created by community activists, which has a formalized structure and is authorized by authorities to participate in decision-making processes at the community level. By the end of the reporting period Vesta has supported the creation of three functional Public Council in the towns of Comrat, Ciadir-Lunga and Basarabasca.

Basarabasca Public Council is in the process of developing its Statute and Regulations. Ciadir-Lunga's Public Council, which had been in a stagnant period for the last half of the year, resumed its activity as a result of appointment of a new mayor who is willing to engage civil society in community decision-making. Both of these Councils are working on solving a few community-level problems such as access to clean drinking water, integration of people with disabilities, and public infrastructure. The first results of their activity should be evident in next quarter. Comrat Public Council, the most active one of the three, organizes regular meetings to brainstorm and find best solutions for problems such as improving activities of the Fidanjik village Rehabilitation Center, supporting underserved families, developing Comrat Town General Plan and improving the water supply for Comrat town.

"I do hope this new project will become useful and improve the life of our citizens. I also hope this newly created Public Council will come as timely succor for town authorities in solving many community issues."

Serghei Anastasov, Comrat Mayor,
attended the Public Council meeting on
March 3, 2016.

Motivatie and Centrul pentru Asistenta Juridica pentru Persoane cu Dizabilitati – CAJPD (Center of Legal Assistance for Persons with Disabilities) continued building capacities of community-based CSOs and initiative groups in engaging PWD in public decisions affecting their rights. CAJPD provided



Well-known Moldovan journalists joined CJI campaign and discussed with the Speaker about their right to attend Parliament plenary sessions, CJI Chisinau, 2016.

support to the Edinet-based CSO Vivere in developing an advocacy campaign aimed at setting aside special parking spaces for people with disabilities' cars and marking them with special signs in front of public buildings in Edinet town.

Centrul de Jurnalism Independent – CJI (Independent Journalism Center) is focused on amending the Law on Access to Information. CJI collected recommendations collected on how public information can be

better accessed by citizens and incorporated these recommendations in the draft law it submitted to the Parliament. The draft law was accepted and registered in the Parliament. It foresees modifying the procedure of registering requests for official information, reducing the term of presenting the information, and increasing penalties for public officials who violate citizens' rights to access official information. In addition, the

"Although I knew how to write a request for information to local public authorities, trainers showed us broader and more varied models, which allow us to better know our rights and obligations in relation to access to information."

Victoria Popa, reporter for Jurnal de Chisinau newspaper and participant at CJI training.

"I am very pleased with this training, which helped me understand how to use open databases, where to seek useful information to produce journalistic materials. I also better understood some provisions of the Law on access to information."

Nadejda Cobet, freelance journalist and participant at CJI training.

organization runs the second campaign under this grant to ensure journalists' access to Parliament sessions and raise awareness about the restriction of journalists' access to plenary Parliament meetings. The center engaged stakeholders in signing petitions and participating in flash mobs in front of the Parliament. As a result of CJI efforts, Parliament has canceled its ban on media access to plenary sessions in mid-April. This achievement will be described in more detail in the next report.

Beyond their work on legal access to information, CJI continues to develop journalists' capacities in various areas, including accessing public information. A CJI training on February 12, 2016, improved the skills of 12 Moldova journalists in obtaining information of public interest, writing official requests and working with open governmental data.

In the reporting period, another MPSCS grantee **Fundatia pentru Dezvoltare din Republica Moldova - FDRM (Foundation for the Advancement of Moldova)** developed a comprehensive analysis of education-focused legislation in Moldova by applying the Methodological Guide for drafting informative notes for legislative and normative acts, previously developed by the CSO under this award. The analysis covered July – December 2015 and includes strong and weak points of 52 laws and regulations including GoM decisions, regulations, Ministry orders, strategies, policies and laws, 23 of which were approved by the Ministry of Education (MoE). The analysis concludes that the MoE did not apply the Methodological Guide requirements such as seeking parents' input when developing relevant legal education documents. As the analysis states, the MoE does not include sufficient description of the problem background including external factors, beneficiaries and risks in the informative notes to the legislative acts which may reduce the utility of the developed document.

The analysis was presented to the public and submitted to the responsible MoE as well. The MoE acknowledged the revealed gaps and will further solicit FDRMs' input and guidance when training its staff on how to develop educational policies and laws.

In the reporting period, FDRM continued to train school principals and their deputies in improving management practices and educational leadership. The organization trained a total of 20 representatives from 17 schools from across Moldova. In partnership with the MoE, the grantee also developed an informative brochure on international donors' support for education. The brochure was distributed in over 1,000 Moldovan schools.



FDRM presenting the Analysis of Methodological Guide for drafting informative notes for legislative and normative acts, Chisinau, March 10, 2016.

Asociatia Psihologilor Tighina – APT (Association of Psychologists from Tighina) continued to improve the skills of local multidisciplinary teams from three raions – Causeni, Stefan-Voda and Anenii Noi - in assisting disadvantaged youth. The CSO conducted six workshops for 78 social workers, police officers, doctors, nurses, teachers, psychologists, and other relevant professionals and activists, who work at the local level. APT's assistance and coaching is aimed at improving capacities of the local multidisciplinary teams in identifying disadvantaged and undeserved families in these localities and in providing ongoing assistance to this target group. As a result of this support, two beneficiaries from Stefan-Voda received psychological counseling and social assistance through community specialized services. In addition, APT assisted the Carnateni village to develop its 2016 Action Plan, which was recently approved by the LPA.

MPSCS EP partners, **Caroma Nord** and **EcoContact**, are continuing their advocacy campaigns to include environmentally-sensitive activities in the Local Development Strategies/Plans. Both CSOs worked with authorities from target communities: Mihaileni village, Rascani raion, Lapusna town,

Hancesti raion, Carpineni village, Calarasi raion, and Balti municipality. In the reporting period, Caroma Nord signed a Collaboration Agreement with Balti Municipal Council, after three months of negotiations. According to this Agreement, a public-private committee was created and mandated to develop a Local Environmental Strategy. Following EcoContact's in-depth mentorship, the LPA from Mihaileni village developed and approved the Local Development Plan, and Carpineni Village Plan is in the final stages of development and will be approved in the next quarter. The grantee will continue providing assistance to these localities to allow them to implement their development plans. Over 10,000 citizens will have a better infrastructure and more accessible health care in their villages because of these plans.

MPSCS SP partner **Contact-Cahul** continued to improve CSOs' skills in local-level advocacy, influencing decision-making and enhancing civic participation. The grantee empowered six local CSOs from across Moldova through on-line trainings to implement advocacy campaigns at the local level starting in April, 2016. The Southern Consultative Group, created by Contact-Cahul consists of 17 CSOs. They carried out four meetings with Cahul town authorities and managed to improve the South Regional Development Strategy 2016-2020 by including additional priorities such as developing the tourist potential of Cahul, creating conditions for entrepreneurship in the area and strengthening CSO's participation in decision-making processes. In addition, Contact-Cahul hired an expert to monitor the implementation of the three regional development policies in Moldova. The monitoring reports for each region should be made public by end of September, 2016.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY RIGHTS ADVOCACY

MPSCS worked intensively with PWD Rights program recipients to enable them to implement the MPSCS requirements regarding financial management and reporting, and to establish partnerships among one another.

Keystone Moldova continued to ensure participation of PWD and civil society actors in developing local strategies for integration of PWD in the Anenii Noi and Laloveni districts. Keystone developed draft policy documents for each district and submitted them for public consultations. Ninety-five participants including LPA representatives, CSOs members, social workers, people with disabilities and their families discussed the draft documents at two roundtables. Based on the received recommendations, Local Councils in each

Tatiana, a woman living with a disability from Anenii Noi district, provided her input while developing the local strategy on social inclusion of PWD. She described the difficulties she faces everyday coming to work. Tatiana stressed the need to change the public's attitude towards the needs of PWD. Tatiana stressed this is especially true of officials responsible for strategy implementation. Keystone Moldova will keep engaging Tatiana and other PWD from the district to closely monitor the implementation phase of the local strategy on social inclusion of PWD.

A 23-year-old man, with intellectual disabilities, from a rural area, found out about the activities organized by Speranta and insisted on being included in the focus group to test easy-to-read materials. Before participating in the groups he was very depressed. After attending two focus groups, he became more confident, made new friends, became more independent and felt he was a member of a community. The example of others inspires him to change. He is very active in discussing the easy-to-read materials and is anticipating future meetings of the focus group.

district approved two local Strategies on social inclusion of PWD in February 2016. The strategies will improve living conditions of PWD by adjusting public facilities to their needs (public transportation, public buildings), developing inclusive services, creating employment opportunities and promoting positive image of PWD.

Speranta continued to develop an innovative easy-to-read handbook on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Law on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, providing people with intellectual and learning disabilities accessible

information about their rights. Speranta organized two focus groups to test easy-to-read materials, involving 19 PWD from four districts and two volunteers, also PWD. As a result of all of the focus groups organized to date, the participants discussed and tested how PWDs perceive and understand over 80 articles from the two legal documents. Assisted by an international expert from Romania, Speranta developed the first draft of easy-to-read materials, which will be discussed and improved during the next reporting period.

Speranta si Sanatate aims to increase the level of legal knowledge among people with intellectual I disabilities and their guardians. With the assistance of a legal consultant, the CSO carried out two trainings for 70 parents and/or guardians of PWD, social workers, CSO representatives, on legal assistance guaranteed by the state and employment opportunities for PWD. One of the trainings was organized in Ungheni town, at the request of the Social Assistance Department of Ungheni. On an ongoing basis, Speranta si Sanatate collected requests for free legal consultations and provided 28 individual consultations at beneficiaries' homes, in the Speranta si Sanatate office and by phone. Beneficiaries with mental disabilities and their families need legal assistance on guardianship, on how to prepare and submit documents for state-paid indemnity for children, and on how to find out about rehabilitation services for PWD. Speranta si Sanatate's legal expert is closely monitoring all the cases to make sure that the rights of their constituency are observed. The CSO also analyzed over 40 relevant legislative documents and formulated 12 recommendations to improve the situation of people with mental disabilities, which will be discussed during the next trainings and submitted to relevant authorities.



Beneficiaries of the training organized by Speranta si Sanatate discussing legal assistance guaranteed by the state, Ungheni, March 17, 2016.

SOS Autism aims to increase social integration of people diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and facilitate their access to services and rehabilitation programs by developing a policy document on autism. SOS Autism held four meetings of the inter-ministerial WG with representatives from the

"We are proud that the team of students from our high school implemented this great project that benefits the whole school. The initiative group is very ambitious and persistent. The benches in front of the school help students to rest and decorate our school."

Colesnic Ala, School Principal, Miron Costin High School, Floresti.

Polisciuc Eugen, a team member from the initiative group described his experience: "I feel very satisfied with the project implementation. Now we have a well arranged environment and, what is more important, we've had a unique experience."

Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor, the Ministry of Social Protection and Family, and the MoE. The WG received support and input from an international expert from Romania, and representatives of CSOs working in the field of autism and parents of children with autism. Through these consultations, it developed a draft of policy document to support people with autism spectrum disorder. The WG initially planned to develop a national strategy, but reached the conclusion that a policy document on autism, to be incorporated into National Health Program, will be more effective. The final draft will be presented for public consultations by the end of April 2016.

OSORC (located in Tiraspol, de-facto capital of the Moldova's breakaway region of Transnistria) aims to raise awareness and inform the public about PWD and to increase social involvement and visibility of PWDs

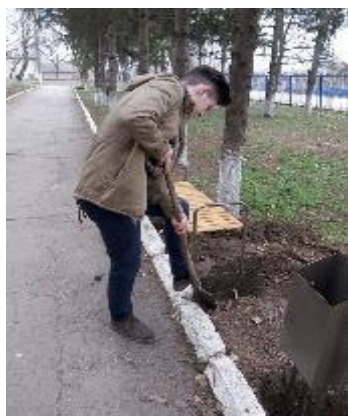
and their families. To increase the level of legal knowledge of PWD and their families, OSORC organized a seminar on legal education and PWD rights for 22 participants, people with disabilities and their parents. In addition, the CSO carried out a social survey and interviewed 418 people to learn about perceptions of PWDs by the community and collect information on the needs of PWDs and their families. OSORC presented the conclusions of the survey to 36 people at a roundtable, including representatives of local authorities. Based on survey results, the roundtable participants discussed inclusive education for people with disabilities, employment and leisure opportunities, accessibility on the street and in buildings, medical services, legal requirements to obtain a certificate attesting to a disability, and services for PWD provided by the public institutions and local CSOs.

YOUTH INTEGRATION

Three MPSCS CSOs – **Consiliul National al Tineretului din Moldova - CNTM (The National Youth Council of Moldova)**, **Pro-Comunitate** and **Certitudine** – worked closely with the GoM and other relevant authorities to improve youth participation in Moldova. CNTM continued to monitor the implementation of youth policies and budget allocation for youth activities throughout Moldova. In the reporting period, the CSO met with youth and youth workers from four localities: Falesti, Soldanesti, Basarabasca and Soroca towns. Drawing from these field visits, CNTM identified the most pressing needs for attention from the authorities, including low cooperation of LPA with youth CSOs, insufficient funding for youth in most of the districts, irregular funding for youth budgets, lack of priorities in youth policies and others. According to CNTM, due to the economic crisis in Moldova, LPA tend to allocate fewer funds for youth activities in 2016. For example, in Soroca town only MDL 50,000 is planned to be allocated in 2016 versus MDL 80,000 in 2015. The organization will continue its monitoring of youth budgets to ensure even the small youth development budgets are spent efficiently. They will include their research findings in the Monitoring Report on 2016 Youth Budget Allocation and present the findings to the public and relevant authorities.



CNTM discusses youth policy implementation with the Local Youth Council, Soldanesti, February 12, 2016.



Certitudine volunteer from Floresti installing a chair in front of his school, March 2016.

MPSCS grantee – **Pro Comunitate** – solicited youth input in improving youth policies in Moldova and developing the Chisinau Municipal Youth Strategy. The organization gathered over 30 youth from Chisinau, Cimislia, Criuleni, Straseni, Ialoveni, Orhei and Varnita at three workshops on youth policy promotion and youth engagement methodology. These trainings, moderated by an experienced trainer from Estonia, empowered the participants to assess the needs of young people and to organize demand-driven youth and community development programs. In addition, the CSO signed a cooperation partnership agreement with LPA from Balti in order to develop and approve the Youth Strategy from Balti.

Due to its advocacy efforts, **Certitudine**'s Executive Director was appointed by the LPA as a member of the Balti Municipal Council's Committee on Youth. Certitudine will use this important membership to fully promote the youth development agenda in Balti town. Also in the reporting period, the grantee empowered 16 youth from Floresti town to mobilize community support and implement a project aimed at installing six chairs and four trash-bins in front of the local high school.

In order to integrate young people into social life, **Casmed** continues improving youth knowledge in various areas. In February, the CSO's volunteers organized an "Hour of Europe" event for 25 pupils of Prepelita school, Singerei raion. Young participants had the opportunity to find more information about France as a EU founding and member country, French history, culture, politics, personalities and norms. With the help of Casmed volunteers, the pupils learned some elementary vocabulary in a foreign language not yet taught in their school. The experience motivated pupils to think about the possibility of learning French in addition to English and becoming a volunteer in near future.

ADVOCACY INDEX AND COMMUNITY SCORECARD

MPSCS Advocacy Index and Community Scorecard

MPSCS continued assisting CSOs willing to improve their skills in advocacy and citizen engagement. As noted in the previous report, MPSCS is assisting two partners – Contact-Cahul and Caroma Nord in testing, the CSO Advocacy Index designed to enable the CSOs to monitor the community-level impact of their advocacy initiatives, and the Community Scorecard (CSC) aimed at assessing the level of community involvement and participation in CSO project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

In the reporting period, **Contact-Cahul** applied the MPSCS Advocacy Index and assessed the advocacy and citizens' engagement skills of the following Moldovan CSOs: Tarna Rom (Chisinau), Oameni pentru oameni (Edinet), Diaconia (Causeni), Contact Centru (Chisinau), Casmed (Balti) and Artena (Cahul). The preliminary data show the CBOs are more experienced in advocacy and their scores are better compared to the Chisinau based CSOs. This is due to the fact that the local CSOs have a stronger cooperation with their constituencies and authorities. They are more open to share their experiences with other CBOs and to identify gaps in their advocacy activities. The assessed CSOs mentioned that the Advocacy Index was a very useful tool and helped them to identify their strengths and weaknesses in advocacy. Both national and local CSOs stressed that due to the economic crisis and the high level of migration, it is more and more difficult to engage citizens and to keep them motivated in public decision making. All the participating CSOs will keep sharing advocacy experience with one another and declared their willingness to undertake another such an assessment in one year.

Next quarter, Contact-Cahul will apply the Advocacy Index to its eleven community based partner CSOs which were assessed in summer 2015 to track progress and to identify challenges.

In the reporting period, MPSCS team has worked with a few grantees and simplified the MPSCS CSC so it can be applied by any Moldovan CSO without prior in-depth training. MPSCS partners Contact-Cahul, Caroma-Nord, CAJPD, APT, CJU FCPS and Casmed will test this version of the CSC starting with April. They will share the results and experience of the testing with all Moldovan CSOs so that the tool can be used by any CSO interested in improving the community participation into their projects.

CIVIL SOCIETY STAKEHOLDERS' COORDINATION

The coordination of civil society activities with donor's community was very intensive this quarter. During the last meeting of the civil society donors on February 23, MPSCS provided a status update on the development of the 2% designation mechanism and law on social entrepreneurship. Due to this interest of donors in the civil society legal framework, MPSCS, in partnership with CRJ, carried out a civil society donor meeting on the 2% designation mechanism at the Swedish Embassy on

March 30. CRJ presented the latest update on this draft law such as who is entitled to designate 2% of their income tax, which CSOs are eligible to benefit, and allowable activities using 2% designation funds. The meeting finished with a Q&A session. Participants appreciated the first hand information on the civil society legal framework and agreed to organize such meetings in the coming months.

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

MPSCS and its partners continue engaging Moldovan media in highlighting their success and campaign achievements. Online media outlets and social networks remain the most widely used in increasing civil society visibility in Moldova being budget-friendly and reaching a large audience both in Moldova and abroad.

In the reporting quarter, the MPSCS Facebook page has substantially increased the number of visitors it receives. For example, the announcement regarding the concert on World Autism Awareness Day organized by SOS Autism on April 2, reached 177,629 people, had 413 shares and 20 comments. Another post that reached 103,058 people was about the launch of the STOP FALS! campaign. Local print media is mostly used by rural organizations in reaching their target audience, who do not have access to the internet. Organizations in these regions in particular continue to strengthen their relationships with radio and TV stations. In January, one of the program grantees - **Pro Comunitate** – took part in a radio show to highlight the problems facing youth and youth workers in Moldova and how the 2014-2020 National Youth Strategy can help to solve those problems.

OBJECTIVE 2: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF STRATEGIC PARTNERS DEVELOPED

In the reporting period, MPSCS continued to support the capacity development of its partner CSOs to improve their governance, financial management, procurement, project management and fundraising skills. This was realized through enhanced technical assistance, guidance and supervision. Most of the MPSCS partner organizations continued to implement their TDPs and registered organizational development progress in several areas.

MPSCS Strategic partners - CICO, Contact-Cahul and CRJ - continued to receive enhanced assistance aimed at improving their internal regulations and procedures, and consolidating their roles as leaders in their sectors. MPSCS assisted CRJ in finalizing the project proposal for USAID direct funding. Russian speaking CSOs from Moldova, especially from its Gagauz Autonomous region and Transnistria, need capacity building in Russian and unfortunately no local donors are focusing on this. To respond to this need, MPSCS carried out a workshop for the 12 leading CSOs from these regions and identified areas of need for future MPSCS capacity building (CB) assistance to these CSO.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Based on the second ODA results, all MPSCS partner CSOs (EP and SP partners) have designed and submitted their annual TDPs. In the reporting period, twenty-six CSOs - 18 EP, three SP and five PWD partners - continued to develop stronger internal systems, policies and procedures, especially in HR and good governance. Most of the partners have requested

“Thanks to our individual training and development plan we feel mobilized and result-oriented in our organizational development efforts. We improved our internal processes and documents and this had a good effect even on our public visibility. Speranta si Sanatate is positioning itself more and more as a leader in promoting and defending the rights of people with intellectual disabilities and their families. Together with other CSOs, we provided our input to the Alternative Report on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.”

Tatiana Roscovan, Speranta si Sanatate Project Coordinator.

individual TA from CICO, the MPSCS capacity building partner, since such kind of assistance is much more productive when it comes to revising CSOs internal regulations and practices. In order to keep

an open flow of communication and to maintain personal contacts among partners, CICO is organizing regular workshops so assisted CSO can meet and share their CB experience.

PARTNERS' TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Most of the MPSCS partners - EP, SP and PWD - continued to improve their organizational capacities in compliance with their annual activity plans. In the reporting period, eight MPSCS partner organizations improved their policies or procedures in HR management. **CAJPD** has adopted the Staff Salary Internal Policy as a result of previous assistance and guidance of an external legal adviser. **FDRM** began developing the Conflict of Interests and Staff Salary/Motivation Policies. **Caroma Nord** received comprehensive assistance from CICO to improve the HR legal documents such as labor contracts, job descriptions, internal regulation required by state bodies (Labor Inspectorate).

FCPS, assisted by an external expert, developed the Staff Development Plan according to the Annual Staff Evaluation results. **Speranta si Sanatate** developed new job descriptions, purchased specialized CSO accounting software, and trained their accountant on how to use the electronic accounting system. MPSCS carried out a team building workshop for the following partners: **SOS Autism, Motivatie and CJU. Casmed** hired a fundraiser to increase the organization's ability to attract funds, from the local and national governments, and to prepare the organization to start an income generation activity. **Keystone Moldova**, assisted by an external expert, has worked on improving its financial sustainability. As a result, with assistance from a donor, Keystone equipped a conference room that will be rented to CSOs and for-profit companies. Two CSOs, **API** and **Speranta**, developed their communications strategies. In line with its TDP, **Certitudine** and **Caroma Nord** submitted required documents to the Ministry of Youth and Sports Certifications Commission and received the certificates as volunteer hosting organizations. **OSORC, SOS Autism, API, EcoContact, Contact-Cahul** and **CICO** continued to attend English courses to improve their teams' writing and speaking skills.

SUPPORT TO A LOCAL MARKET FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND PROVIDERS

In April 2015, MPSCS competitively selected and contracted the Contact Center & CTO Caraseni to develop a study on CSO organizational development service provision, trainings for the selected trainers and to update the MPSCS online database of trainers and journalists. The purpose of the assessment of the CSO capacity development needs and the service providers was to identify the strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and challenges for organizational capacity building in the Moldovan market. The one-year contract with Contact Center & CTO Caraseni ended in February, 2016.

The service provider managed to carry out all activities of the assignment according to the initial work plan and submitted the final report on time. Main conclusions and recommendations of the report are summarized as follows:

Study on the CSO Capacity Development Needs and the Service Providers

Main findings:

- Moldovan CSOs still need support in developing their internal systems, especially in result-based and organizational change management procedures.
- The capacity building market is mostly lopsided, with many service providers and few clients able to pay for services.
- Service provider CSOs need to increase their visibility and form partnerships among themselves.
- To consolidate organizational development, CSOs need to develop and implement organizational development plans.

Contact Center & CTO Caraseni disseminated the results of the study at three roundtables organized in the North, South, and Center of Moldova. Close to 70 CSO representatives attended the roundtables and learned about the key findings and outcomes of this assessment.

Building Organizational and Training Capacity

Service providers, supported by an international trainer Cristian Negut (Romania), carried out Training of Trainers and follow up assistance to 21 Moldovan trainers/CSOs. Seventeen CSOs are preparing to conduct assessments within their organizations as a result of this Training of Trainers. Two organizations (International Center for Training and Professional Development and DVV International) already applied organizational assessment tools and revised their Strategic Plans. This cohort of well-prepared 21 Moldovan trainers/CSOs will diversify and strengthen the competition among the actors providing services to CSOs. Many of them are contracted already by MPSCS partner CSOs and other CSOs.

Cycle of Capacity Building Trainings

One hundred and eighty-three representatives of CSOs and individual training providers (33 CSO representatives more than planned) improved their skills during five two-day trainings on organizational assessment and interactive training methods; developing/revising strategic priorities of the CSO; project management; result-based management; and HR management.

Tailored follow up assistance

Contact Center & CTO Caraseni conducted 11 field visits to CSOs instead of the planned eight providing follow up assistance on strategic planning, organizational assessment, for-fee services and project development. More than thirty CSO representatives improved their capacities in one of the topics.

Club/Platform of discussions for capacity builders and CSOs

Seventy-six (75 planned) capacity builders, legal consultants and CSOs representatives discussed the CB trainings at five cluster clubs carried out by Contact Center & CTO Caraseni. The cluster clubs built a community of practice, coordinated their efforts and established a development agenda for the civil sector through the principle of “learning from each other”.

The main recommendations as a result of these discussions are to continue supporting service providers, replicate best practices, increase post-training tailored support and encourage webinar development as a new practice in Moldova. Upon completion of the Contact Center & CTO Caraseni subcontract, MPSCS through its Strategic partner CICO will continue investing efforts in developing skills of the service providers. Capacity builders will be invited to cluster clubs and other events organized under MPSCS in subsequent periods.

Improving MPSCS capacity building/trainers’ and journalists’ databases

By February 2016, MPSCS redesigned and launched two databases - capacity building/trainers’ and journalists’ databases. The databases are available on the www.ngo.md website. This virtual platform enables CSOs to find information on training opportunities and resources quickly and more efficiently, upload information about their own organizations and activities, and share resources and



“I developed my first CSO strategic plan and I developed the by-laws for my CSO. Also, I understood the result-based management and I was not afraid to talk in front of the public! Now I am working on registering my CSO.”

Cristina Bejenaru,
CTO Caraseni training participant,
Chisinau, 2015.

experiences with other peers. The journalists' database helps CSOs to quickly identify journalists covering civil society topics and who are interested in working with CSOs. The database contains 28 CSO experts and eight journalists to date. Contact Center promoted the databases through six websites, a leaflet and public events targeting CSOs, trainers, and journalists. Contact Center will continue maintaining both databases and encouraging CSOs, trainers, and journalists to subscribe and to use the existing resources.

Several CSOs contacted Natalia Crasilnicov, trainer and Chair of the Public Association Artena from Cahul, as soon as she registered herself as an individual trainer in the trainers' database. Natalia is working with some of these organizations already and is encouraging other trainers to register in the trainers' database so that they have access to CSOs seeking capacity building support.

TA TO MPSCS PARTNERS AND OTHER CSOS

"This meeting helped us discover the ways to improve our team spirit, to fulfill our needs and achieve the organization's mission."

Liudmila Nicolaeva,
Coordinator, CSO "Bulgarian Revival",
Parcani village, Transnistrian region,
Moldova.

On January 29, 2016, MPSCS conducted the first Russian-language, half day workshop for Transnistria and Gagauz Autonomous region CSOs. The purpose of this workshop was to identify their needs in organizational development and how MPSCS can respond to those needs. A total of twelve CSOs - four from Gagauz Autonomous region and eight from Transnistrian region – attended the workshop.

As a result of this workshop, the following CB needs were identified:

- Russian speaking CSOs from Moldova do not have access to materials in Russian adjusted to Moldovan realities and legal requirements;
- These CSO cannot attend Romanian language CB trainings and they feel isolated and excluded from the CSO CB development efforts in Moldova;
- Most needed areas for urgent CB interventions are - HR management; engaging volunteers; financial management, and namely: organizational budget planning, fundraising and reporting procedures to donors and establishing and maintaining efficient relationship with media.
- The organizations lack capacities in assessing European and US funds and developing project proposals for international donors;
- Transnistrian CSOs feel the need to improve skills in strategic planning, organizational development and monitoring and assessment;
- They identified the need for further assistance in improving organizational structure, strengthening partnerships, developing operational and managerial procedures, delineating responsibilities in the organizations.



The participants of the Transnistria and Gagauz Autonomous region workshop discuss their experience in organizational development, MPSCS, Chisinau, January 29, 2016.

“This training was the most useful I have participated in so far. Both theory and practical exercises are very helpful.”

“I would like to participate in a similar training on developing project proposals to access European funds in the future.”

“Everything was well organized. The addressed methods and topics were consistent with our needs, even if we are still at the beginning. The trainer was an exceptional professional.”

Participants feedback, 5-day training conducted by CICO, Criuleni, February 2016.

MPSCS and its CB partner CICO have already shared training materials in Russian with the CSOs that attended the workshop. CICO has invited some of these CSOs to its future trainings delivered under the MPSCS. In addition, MPSCS will carry out another workshop for these CSOs next quarter and CICO will continue inviting these CSOs to their MPSCS funded trainings.

In the reporting period, **CICO** conducted two activities to improve skills of CSO representatives in HR management and financial management. In partnership with SOIR Moldova (a Swedish development organization based in Chisinau)

CICO carried out a two-day training on new CSO accounting rules for 32 accountants. In addition, more than 20 HR managers improved their skills in the CICO workshop.

Several MPSCS partners requested CICO, both, fee-based and free training services. FCPS contracted CICO for a five-day training on project management for its partners and Caroma Nord contracted CICO's legal consultancy services to improve their human resource management. In addition, more than thirty representatives of CSOs and LPAs improved their skills in human resource management by attending CICO thematic workshops in Chisinau and Cahul. Although MPSCS does not provide CB support to LPA directly, program grantees strongly encourage participation of local public authorities at the MPSCS events. These events keep LPAs informed about CSOs' problems, and solicits their input in current organizational activities and projects. MPSCS partners improve LPAs' knowledge in the area of civil society activity and development, and efficient result-oriented partnerships.

OBJECTIVE 3: ENABLING ENVIRONMENT MORE CONDUCTIVE TO LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF CIVIL SOCIETY

In the reporting period, MPSCS and its partners – ECNL, TsL, CRJ - carried out advocacy campaigns on a number of issues – the percentage of income tax CSO-funding mechanism, social entrepreneurship, and the Law on Public Associations. As a result of these efforts, the draft law amending the existing 2% designation mechanism was accepted for review in the Parliament and the Ministry of Economy published for public consultations the draft law on social entrepreneurship. MPSCS launched a call for and contracted a local expert to prepare an evaluation of implementation of the Civil Society Development Strategy (CS Strategy) 2012-2015. Moreover, a few useful resources such as the study on CSO fundraising and philanthropy in Moldova and the guide on financial management of CSOs were distributed to CSOs and public authorities. Tineri si Liberi – TsL (Young and Free Resource Center) with the support of the National Council of CSOs worked with authorities to include civil society development issues in the Government of Moldova (GoM) action plans such as the GoM 2016-2018 Activity Program and the GoM Priority Reform Action Roadmap – key measures to be met by July 31, 2016.

ENHANCING CSOS EXPERTISE IN ADVOCACY AND CIVIC OVERSIGHT

ECNL's consultant from Poland developed an online course on advocacy, *All you need to know about advocacy*, for a selected group of Moldovan CSOs. The course consisted of three online modules (methods of advocacy, organization's capacity, and planning a campaign). Some modules included

assignments for the participants, with further feedback from the expert. On March 16-17, 2016 a final in-person training took place in Chisinau with six participating organizations, and 11 participants. The enrolled organizations could send up to two representatives, who worked on planning their own advocacy campaign. Themes of planned campaigns include promoting sustainability of local service provider CSOs, Roma employment, and social network support to elderly. The course and training were evaluated highly for the peer learning opportunity and balanced combination of theory and practice.



Graduating from the online course on advocacy *All you need to know about advocacy* delivered by ECNL, Chisinau, March 17, 2016.

Additionally, MPSCS and ECNL organized a workshop on civic oversight and watchdogging in Chisinau for a broader group of CSOs from the regions on March 15, 2016. This activity aimed to promote local-level participation and advocacy with focus on access to information. Altogether, 27 participants from around Moldova, including Transnistrian region, participated in the workshop. The training was co-delivered by Katarzyna Batko-Toluc and Zenon Michajlowski, a local activist from Poland, who has been involved on access to

"I appreciated trainers' openness and frankness. We will try to show translate this experience from Poland for our people, as we're planning to start working with local communities."

Participant of the Workshop on civic oversight and watchdogs, March 15, 2016.

information litigation cases and campaigns. From participants' evaluation further trainings on access to information, CSO participation in decision-making, and watchdogging were put among future topics of interest.

SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CSO STRATEGY

TsL, which currently acts as a secretary of the National Council of CSOs (consisting of 11 leading CSOs elected by a bi-annual Forum of over 100 Moldovan CSOs to represent civil society interests) monitored the GoM efforts to improve the legal environment for CSOs and implementation of the action plan of the CS Strategy 2012-2015. To expedite the implementation of the CS Strategy TsL organized a meeting of the National Council of CSOs with the recently elected Prime Minister of Moldova, Pavel Filip, and several



National Council of CSOs meeting with the Prime Minister, organized by Tineri si Liberi, Chisinau, February 12, 2016.

ministers on February 12. CSOs representatives highlighted the delays in implementing the strategy such as the 2% designation mechanism, volunteering, and CSOs' participation in decision-making processes. The Prime Minister assured civil society participants that all of them will be invited to participate in any relevant meeting at the GoM and will have the opportunity to provide input when finalizing the 2% designation mechanism. The Minister of Youth and Sports, Victor Zubcu informed CSOs that they have already drafted a law on youth development with a separate component on volunteering, which will help CSOs to involve volunteers and promote this spirit among youth. The National Council of CSOs continued its communications with the GoM after this meeting and as a result, most of the civil society priorities has been included in the GoM action plans: GoM 2016-2018 Activity Program and the GoM Priority Reform Action Roadmap – key measures until July 31, 2016. TsL will continue monitoring GoM commitments on developing the civil society and will keep informing CSOs on any successes or delays.

The GoM 2016-2018 Activity Program includes as one of the points the development of a new CS Strategy. To support partners in their efforts, MPSCS launched a call for a local expert to carry out an evaluation of implementation of the CS Strategy 2012-2015. Through a tender procedure, an experienced Moldovan evaluator Gheorghe Caraseni was selected and contracted. MPSCS provided support in developing methodology of research, questionnaires for online distribution, focus groups and interviews, sharing background and comparative materials, in person and skype consultations. Upon review and revision of the first draft, the evaluation report will be put for public discussion to be organized in the end of May with participation of the public authorities, CSOs and donors.

REVISING LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK AND IMPROVING IMPLEMENTATION

2% designation mechanism

Following the advocacy campaign carried out by CRJ over the last year, the draft law amending the existing 2% designation mechanism was accepted for review in the Parliament on February 22, 2016. The draft law establishes equal access of public associations and religious entities to the percentage designation mechanism, simplifies the way the percentage designations are made and used, and puts in place fair rules for reporting and sanctioning the beneficiaries, in case of misusing resources. The draft law anticipates the implementation of the 2% designation mechanism starting on January 1, 2017 so that the citizens can use the mechanism for their income obtained in 2016.

In March 2016, representatives of the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the State Tax Service, the MoJ and the Financial Inspection met at a roundtable organized by CRJ to discuss the implementation of the percentage designation mechanism in Moldova. The attendees discussed each authorities' role on developing the Regulation to implement the 2% designation mechanism. The Regulation should provide an easy to understand procedure to ensure designations by physical taxpayers and their subsequent transfer to the beneficiaries, designations usage by beneficiaries, adequate and fair rules for reporting and sanctioning the beneficiaries in case of improper use of the designations. Participants committed to advancing the draft implementing Regulation (including the templates), adjusting internal regulations for their respective units, and agreed on some administrative procedures and deadlines. Importantly, further awareness raising among CSOs and potential designators was discussed, since the CSOs may need to start registration as beneficiaries as early as September, 2016. Based on the MoJ request, MPSCS collected and shared comparative information on registries for percentage beneficiaries from Poland, Slovakia and Hungary. As decided, in the next quarter, the MoF will adjust the draft GoM decision and solicit CRJ comments on it.

Law on Public Associations

CRJ finalised the analysis on the Law on Public Associations based on the results of the survey launched in the autumn 2015 and the feedback received from ECNL. The draft analysis covers several issues affecting public association's sustainability, namely the division of public associations into local, regional and national, limiting, thus, their area of activity; limitation of certain categories of persons, such as persons deprived of their legal capacity, some categories of civil servants, non-residents and legal business entities to establish, be members and/or leaders of public associations; lack of capacity to set different categories of members of public associations; and additional requirements on registration of associations, such as confirmation of the



CRJ experts presenting the proposed amendments to the Law on Public Associations, Chisinau, March 11, 2016.

name of association. The organization presented this analysis including a list of recommendations at a roundtable on March 17, 2016. Representatives from leading CSOs, MoJ and MoF attended it. The issues shared by the participants, such as the requirement to have a control and revision body for all types of organizations, registration of CSOs on the local level, and submission of excessive membership information, will be further considered when working on amendments to the law. Due to CRJ efforts on improving this law, the MoJ decided to create a public – private WG to revise the current law and to develop a new law which will be in line with European best practices. The MoJ issued Order no. 268 on March 22, 2016 establishing the WG, having as its members the representatives of the MoJ, civil society and the donor community. Six out of nine members are CSO representatives. CRJ is represented by its Executive Director and Legal Advisor. The MoJ order establishes a deadline of three months to draft a new Law on Public Associations.

Social entrepreneurship

In line with its work plan, **Motivatie** requested the public authorities re-launch the WG in charge of developing the legal framework for the social entrepreneurship. The legal framework for the social entrepreneurship will allow CSOs to generate income and strengthen their financial sustainability.



Motivatie together with stakeholders developing the social entrepreneurship legislation, Chisinau, January 18, 2016.

The WG led by the Ministry of Economy resumed its work at the end of 2015. To help this WG develop a proper legal framework, Motivatie hired a legal expert and created an informal Platform for promotion of social entrepreneurship consisted of over 15 CSOs and business sector representatives. To insure a participatory process, Motivatie together with its legal expert conducted a series of workshops where developed a platforms' common vision and definition of social entrepreneurship proper for Moldova. Moreover, MPSCS and ECNL has been supporting the group of CSOs working on the amendments through in person consultations and through detailed written comments to the law amendments. ECNL's

expert opinion to the draft law amendments on social entrepreneurship was reviewed by the drafter and the Social Enterprise platform and incorporated in the final version of the law amendments. In February, Motivatie, after several consultative workshops presented the finalized first draft law and an informational note to the GoM WG. On March 15, 2016 the Ministry of Economy published this draft law and an informational note for public consultations: <http://goo.gl/CSMg1d>. Motivatie will continue providing support to GoM to finalize the draft law on social entrepreneurship.

MOBILIZING DOMESTIC RESOURCES FOR CSO FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The study on CSO fundraising and philanthropy in Moldova "Fundraising by Moldovan civil society organizations from domestic sources: opportunities and perspectives" was finalized and is available on the MPSCS website <http://goo.gl/Y36V8f>. It provides an overview of existing practice, review of the legal framework with recommendations for improvement, and five case studies. On February 2, MPSCS and ECNL convened the discussion on the pre-final draft, which attracted 47 participants from CSOs, public authorities and donors' community. Two core problems were most discussed: (1) unclear and non-harmonized legal framework on philanthropy and (2) lack of local capacities to raise private funds. MPSCS and ECNL plans to reconvene key stakeholders from CSOs that raise funding from private philanthropy and representatives of the public authorities to follow up on recommendations of the study. This will be a smaller group meeting to identify potential areas for improvement, also based on the findings of the fiscal overview on philanthropy undertaken by CRJ. To address the need for better CSO capacity to raise private funds, ECNL will bring expert

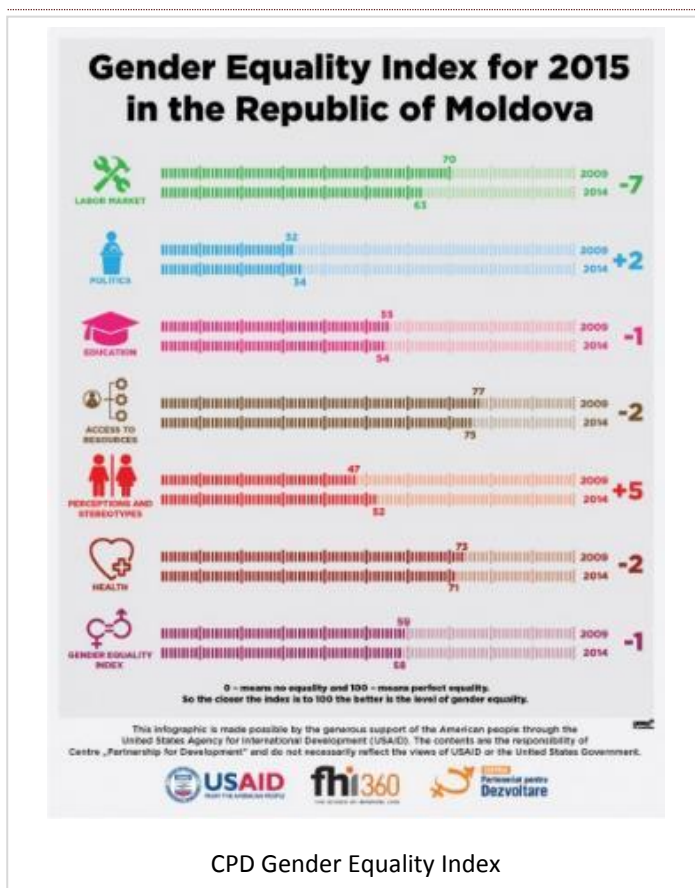
practitioners and fundraisers from Central Europe to Chisinau to hold a highlight workshop on resource mobilization in Chisinau in summer-fall 2016. The workshop will provide a broader forum on fundraising methods as applied in Moldova, and a follow up one full day training as a capacity-building component with support case studies from Central and Eastern Europe. CSOs from Chisinau and regions will be invited to participate.

CSO FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

With new accounting standards in place for all economic agents in Moldova from 2016 and updated Methodological Instructions on Accounting by CSOs, ECNL contracted the author of the Guide on financial management and accounting (developed in 2013) to prepare the second edition of the Guide. The new edition includes updated chapters 5-6, 8-12 that deal with internal policies of accounting, reporting, labor relations, record keeping on economic activities, taxes and duties, and fiscal benefits and responsibility for non-compliance. New forms and templates were added to the publication. MPSCS and ECNL worked extensively with the author and the printing house to prepare for print Romanian version of the Guide and its translation into Russian. Both versions were published in 300 copies each and are being distributed free-of-charge (electronically and hard copies) to local CSOs to ensure compliance with the existing regulations.

CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

GENDER INTEGRATION



On March 25, 2016, MPSCS organized a gender integration workshop for its partners and other Moldovan CSOs to identify good practices and ensure that CSOs include those in their day-to-day activity.

Representatives of 18 CSOs – Contact-Cahul, Caroma Nord, Casmed, Vesta, CPD, Certitudine, FDRM, CRJ, Motivatie, CJI, CAJPD, OSORC, Speranta, Tineri si Liberi, National Gender Platform, Feedback (Basarabeasca) and the Association for Children with Disabilities’ Families from the Transnistrian region – learned how to take into account gender aspects while planning or implementing activities. Participants shared their best practices in prompting women’s participation in their activities. **CRJ, Contact-Cahul, CAJPD, and Motivatie** introduced equal conditions into their salary and professional development policies. In addition, the participants mentioned that both women and men are equally participating and providing

input in the CSO’s activities including developing project proposals, strategic planning and implementation, evaluating activity impact. **Speranta** incorporated the gender dimension in its communication strategy and encouraged equal participation of women and men - parents of children with disabilities - in their organizational activities by informing and inviting both gender



The Gender Integration workshop offered participants the opportunity to learn good practices and exchange experience in applying gender approach in organizational development, Chisinau, March 25, 2016.

participants to organized events. Both **Motivatie** and **Certitudine** succeeded to achieve an equal gender participation while developing their strategic plans.

Vesta engaged both women and men in its project activities, a practice which is still new for many CSOs from the region. **Casmed**, **FDRM**, **Certitudine** and **Vesta** established gender balance as main criteria when selecting their project beneficiaries and board members. As a follow up to this event, in response to the request of participants, MPSCS will continue to assist the grantees and help them integrate gender into their project-

based activities and internal documents.

On December 22, 2015, **Centrul Parteneriat pentru Dezvoltare - CPD (Center Partnership for Development)** launched through a press conference the first Gender Equality Index 2015 - a tool to measure the level of gender equality in various sectors of Moldova. CPD developed the Gender Equality Index 2015 based on analysis of the impact of gender policies implemented in Moldova in the period of 2009-2014 and based on a public survey conducted among 1,100 citizens, which offers data on discrimination cases and dynamics in Moldova in this period. The Index includes 31 impact indicators clustered in six relevant domains: (I) Labor Market, (II) Politics, (III) Education, (IV) Access to Resources, (V) Perceptions and Stereotypes, and (VI) Health. The Index 2015 includes the period from 2009, when the Moldova National Program for Gender Equality 2010-2015 was adopted, to 2014 - the penultimate year of the Program implementation, and it helps to measure the progresses achieved.

It is important to note that this Index measures inequality for both, the men and women. In Moldova, the gender equality is often confused with the commitment to exclusively promote women's rights, which is an issue as well. Besides that, this Index shows that the gender equality in Moldova is only half achieved. Moreover, the dynamics show that in the period from 2009 to 2014 gender equality decreased in four areas: the labor market, education, resources and health, due to lack of enforcement of gender equality policies by authorities at all levels. The domain of Policy shows better scores, it increased by 2 points due to the fact that women quotas in the 2015 local elections increased. However, the further increase of women involvement in politics and economy is still necessary, as the index' values are still far from the target of full equality. The best performance is recorded in the area of Stereotypes and Perceptions. It increased by 5 points comparing to other areas. The involvement of women in political and social life, stimulation of women's entrepreneurship and better use of their economic potential contributed to increase of their leadership image and the decision making status.

EUROPEAN UNION INTEGRATION AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES

In the reporting period, MPSCS partners finalized the activities focused on raising awareness about the benefits of the European integration for Moldovan citizens.

FEE SUBGRANTEES

Exploring the linkages available at the national and grassroots levels, FEE continued to build a broad national platform of CSOs that highlighted the benefits of EU-Moldova Association Agreement and

Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, and to mobilize popular support for EU integration. In the reporting period, remaining three FEE subgrantees completed their projects. As a result, all nine FEE subgrantees reached their objectives and completed their projects.

UrmaTa developed and broadcasted for a second round on national TV station Moldova 1 four video testimonials of 35-60 minutes about successful examples of EU Integration from Poland, Estonia, Lithuania and Romania. Through this broadcasting, they reached 452,017 people.

Expert-Grup together with its partner organization **ADEPT** monitored the performance of the authorities in implementation of policies in between July - December 2015, in compliance with the signed EU-Moldova Association Agreement. The results of monitoring, its conclusions and recommendations were publicly presented at a press conference in January 2016. The CSOs monitored 23 political areas, 25 economic areas, and 731 specific actions, and concluded that 27% of the monitored actions were implemented by the authorities, while 21% were not fulfilled and 52 % of the actions are in the process of implementation.



Expert-Grup and ADEPT present their Monitoring Report on the implementation of the EU-Moldova Association Agreement, Chisinau, January 27, 2016.

Moldovan authorities attributed slow progress to delays in forming a new government in the last few months, and expressed commitment to continue implementing the Association Agreement provisions once the new government is voted in..

Asociatia de Business European – EBA (European Business Association) carried out one workshop for 36 representatives of the private sector on Moldova's taxes harmonization with EU standards Moldova's tax policy for 2016. All participants highly appreciated the activity and stressed the need for more information on EU-Moldova Association Agreement, as well as development of a better communication and partnerships among the business community.

EU ACTION GRANTS PROGRAM

Under the EU Action Grants Program, three grant recipients finalized their projects (Interact Ltd, Pro Media Ltd, and Contact Center) and four CSOs (Perspectiva, ATVJI, Moldova Fruct, and CRPE) continued with their last project activities to raise awareness of the benefits of European integration and mobilize community support for the European path of Moldova.



Citizens expressing their concerns regarding EU, film on myths about EU edited by ATVJI and broadcasted on March 12, 2016 on TV 7.

To answer concerns of people from Moldova related to EU, **ATVJI** edited and broadcasted three films on the national TV station TV 7 and reached an audience of at least 100,000, covering issues related to the transparency in EU and Moldova, development of small business, and cultural and religious identity. The CSO also broadcasted the stories on six local TV stations, four radio stations and published them

in Ziarul de Garda newspaper. In addition, ATVJI carried out a live TV debate on TV 7 station about the transparency in public decision-making in Moldova and EU. ATVJI project reporters, national experts and media partner attended this TV debate.

At the end of the project, **Moldova Fruct** conducted two additional workshops, in Ungheni on the request from local farmers, and in Vadul lui Voda on request of Moldova-Fruct Board members. Participants identified the main problems faced by fruit producers in adjusting to EU standards, such as the lack of irrigation systems, lack of funding and lack of export opportunities for the Moldovan fruit growers and planned their activities for the next quarters.

Reprezentanta din Republica Moldova a Centrului Roman de Politici Europene – CRPE (Moldovan Branch of Romanian Center for European Policies) organized a public debate to present and consult with Ministry of Regional Development and Construction and entrepreneurs the Study on challenges of the construction sector and the need to adopt the European standards in construction for a more competitive business environment in Moldova. The final document, drafted based on the public debate conclusions, was distributed to at least 100 representatives of the private sector and relevant public authorities. Additionally, CRPE published a practical Guide for university professors, showing step by step how to introduce EU standards in teaching process. Using this guide and materials developed previously within the project, the CSO trained 43 professors from nine Universities on European standards in Education.



Representatives of business community discussing the study on construction sector and European standards, conducted by CRPE, Chisinau, February 9, 2016.

MEDIA CAMPAIGN AGAINST FALSE AND BIASED INFORMATION

In the reporting period, API together with its partners CJI and ATVJI fully unfolded implementation of its STOP FALS! campaign. **API** produced and published three investigative articles combating the false and biased information distributed through the local and external media; translated into Romanian language and distributed ten most relevant articles from Ukrainian website Stopfake.org; conducted two public debates on false and manipulative information in media for 63 people from rural area; and launched a discussion club for media representatives and journalists aimed at analyzing and debating the cases of manipulation and false information disseminated through media and other communication platforms. **CJI** launched a specialized website – www.mediacritica.md aimed at combating propaganda and manipulation

“In case of massive public disorders, will the Romanian military troops invade Moldova?” – this is the title of an article about misinformation propagated by Pervii Kanal TV from Russian Federation published by API. The reporter of the main State Russian TV channel stated that “according to some documents adopted several years ago, if the massive public disorders occur in Moldova, the Romanian army and Romanian administration will enter Moldova, and this will end Moldova’s independence forever”.



API investigative article proves that this information is false and manipulative: <http://goo.gl/EoVrcQ>

in media and building a critical spirit for media consumers in Moldova. In addition, the organization published 42 articles on www.mediacritica.md, which accumulated a total of 5,315 views and 1,320 unique visitors only in March; performed media monitoring of 12 media in Moldova and produced six case studies on manipulation in these media; produced and presented at a press-conference the first monitoring report; and conducted the first survey on public perception of false and distorted information covered by the media. **ATVJI** published three editions of Ziarul de Garda newspaper supplement containing articles about propaganda and manipulation through the media; and produced one TV and a radio program, and aired through the national and local channels. All the above mentioned media materials produced both in Romanian and Russian languages can be downloaded on www.mediacritica.md and <http://api.md/category/stop-fals>.

IV. CHALLENGES

Under the media campaign against false and biased information entitled, “STOP FALS!” API and its partners, CJI and ATVJI, implement activities to counter propaganda disseminated by local and international media in Moldova. The content disseminated by these partners has been welcomed by independent media outlets, who were willing to redistribute them. However, the API director has been contacted by editors and media owners who asked to exclude USAID’s branding and marking requirements. According to these media outlets, the included logo and disclaimer “The program is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)” compromise the independence, credibility and neutrality of the produced materials. API published the materials on a Facebook page as well, and they noticed that many comments were related to the disclaimer and not to the content of the articles.

In addition, Motivatie, TsL and CRJ, in partnership with local authorities, are drafting laws around the civil society enabling environment. These grantees have expressed concerns that if they follow the branding and marking requirements this may undercut host-country government ownership of such material. MPSCS partners report that due to the polarized political situation in Moldova, it is difficult to secure the support of pro-Russian Parliament factions for civil society reforms, if those efforts are perceived as following a pro-Western agenda because of the marking on their draft regulations and policies. CSOs requested an exemption from marking in such situations so that their advocacy can avoid geopolitical associations. As a result, USAID accepted the exemption for certain activities of these grantees.

V. HIGHLIGHTS OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR MPSCS NEXT QUARTER

Objective 1: CSOs More Effectively Represent their Constituencies

- Up to 40 MPSCS grantees and their partners will carry on advocacy campaigns resulting in at least 15 decisions of the national and local public authorities to improve the conditions of women, youth, underserved families, PWD and bed-bound persons;
- Draft law on amending the Law on Access to Information will be examined by GoM as a result of CJI advocacy initiative;
- CNTM will develop and publish a Report on 2020 National Youth Strategy and a Report on Cross Sectorial Evaluation of Youth Policies;
- SOS Autism will organize a Concert dedicated to World Autism Awareness Day, on April 2, 2016, aiming to increase public awareness regarding people with autism and their families and the need to approve a national policy document to support people with autism;
- Speranta will test and print the easy-to-read handbook on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Law on Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities;

- STOP FALS! campaign implemented by the API, CJI and ATVJI will reach up an audience of at least 450,000 people;
- CPD will organize a first Non-Discrimination Forum for employers aimed at adoption of the non-discrimination policies at labor market.

Objective 2: Institutional Capacities of Strategic Partners Developed

- MPSCS EP and SP partners will continue the implementation of the TDPs;
- MPSCS will facilitate the second round of ODA with PWD Rights partners to measure progress and identify areas in need of further development;
- MPSCS will provide TA to all its partners based on CSOs TDP priorities;
- MPSCS will provide ongoing consulting to at least six organizations – Casmed, CAJPD, FCPS, CJU, APT and CNTM - willing to apply the MPSCS Advocacy Index and CSC to strengthen their advocacy and citizen mobilization skills;
- MPSCS will conduct second one-day capacity building workshop for CSOs from Transnistria and Gagauz Autonomous Region based on their organizations' needs and priorities;
- CICO will organize a one-day workshop on the role of auditor in CSOs and two one-day trainings on CSO financial management and budgeting.

Objective 3: Enabling Environment More Conducive to Long-Term Sustainability of Civil Society

- CRJ will meet with Parliament Committees to advocate for the adoption of the draft law amending the 2% designation mechanism. The CSO will also provide comments to MoJ and MoF on the Government Regulation to implement the 2% designation mechanism;
- As part of the WG created within MoJ, CRJ will advocate for developing a new Law on Public Associations;
- An analysis on the necessary amendments to the Fiscal Code, including the taxation regime of third parties who make donations to CSOs, conducted by CRJ and its experts;
- Motivatie will advocate for adoption by GoM of the law on social entrepreneurship;
- TsL will cooperate with the GoM to resume the National Participation Council (a body consisting of leading policy focused CSOs, created by GOM) which monitor the authorities' transparency in decision-making and provide feedback to draft laws;
- MPSCS will present for the discussions the evaluation report on the CS Strategy 2012-2015.

ATTACHMENTS

Annex 1: MPSCS Grants & Subcontracts Database

Annex 2: Comments to draft law amendments on social entrepreneurship in Moldova, ECNL

Annex 3: PWD Rights Grants Program Indicators for October 2015-March 2016

Annex 4: Fundraising by Moldovan civil society organizations from domestic sources: opportunities and perspectives, ECNL